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LETTER DATED 4 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CAMBODIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the statement made on 1 August 1997 by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, First Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, at Aix-en-Provence, France (see annex).

I should be deeply grateful to you if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) SISOWATH Sirirath
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement made on 1 August 1997 at Aix-en-Provence, France, by the First Prime Minister of Cambodia

In an interview with American journalist Ted Koppel broadcast over the air across the world, on 30 July 1997 on the ABC television network, Second Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, the leader of a brutal coup d'état against me, suggested cooperation between the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the Royal Thai Armed Forces to try to capture Mr. Pol Pot and to bring him before an international tribunal.

I wish to remark that up to this point Mr. Hun Sen has always maintained that Mr. Pol Pot was already dead. It is interesting to learn that Mr. Hun Sen has had a change of heart and is now eager to see justice being served in the case of Mr. Pol Pot for the crimes against humanity perpetrated by his Khmer Rouge regime. The truth is that Mr. Hun Sen is not interested at all in seeing his old boss brought to trial because in all likelihood Mr. Pol Pot has many secrets that might implicate Mr. Hun Sen himself as well as a former senior commander of Khmer Rouge forces.

Why was Mr. Hun Sen so adamantly opposed to my effort to negotiate peacefully with the current Khmer Rouge leadership a peaceful reintegration of Khmer Rouge forces into the mainstream of Cambodian life as well as the hand-over of Mr. Pol Pot so he could stand trial before an international court of justice? Mr. Hun Sen still has no interest whatsoever in seeing Mr. Pol Pot brought to justice. Political expediency dictates that he made his statement in yet another ploy to win international support for his coup d'état, capitalizing on the repulsion the world has for Mr. Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge.

Finally, I wish to ask Mr. Hun Sen whether, in all honesty, he does really believe that he has sufficient strength to dislodge the Khmer Rouge from their bases in order to capture Mr. Pol Pot? Has he forgotten that, at the height of the occupation of our country, which installed him in power in the first place, some 200,000 well-armed and well-trained foreign troops failed to do so, and does he seriously think that this proposed military campaign could be conducted successfully at a minimum cost? My educated guess is that countless lives would be wasted once again on either side, including the lives of our Thai friends, assuming that the Royal Thai Government would be naive enough to let Mr. Hun Sen convince it to participate in such a bloody and hopeless campaign. Would it not make more sense to appeal to the wisdom of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk who has succeeded in the last six years since the Paris Peace Accord in wooing over into the fold of the nation tens of thousands of the Khmer Rouge members through his patient policy of national reconciliation? Or is it a habit of Mr. Hun Sen to request the assistance of foreign troops to intervene on Cambodian soil every time that we have a problem to resolve? At the same time, Mr. Hun Sen keeps sending conflicting signals to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) about whether to welcome an intervention by that august body in helping resolve our current political crisis, which he himself created. It should not be forgotten that His Majesty's action has significantly reduced the number of

Khmer Rouge from a high of over 30,000 armed combatants at the conclusion of the Paris Peace Accord to its present size.

As the legal and legitimate First Prime Minister of Cambodia, I appeal to all peace-loving countries in the world to intervene in order to impress upon Mr. Hun Sen of the need to resolve the Khmer Rouge issue peacefully.